DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 021 262 CG 002 300

By- Carmody, Constance E.

THE INTEREST PATTERN OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES.

American Personnel and Guidance Association, Washington, D.C.

Pub Date 8 Apr 68

Note- 11p.; Speech given at the American Personnel and Guidance Assn. Detroit, Michigan, April, 1968.

EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.52

Descriptors- •INTERESTS, •NURSES, •OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE, PUBLIC HEALTH, SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Identifiers- •Strong Vocational Interest Blank

The purpose of this study was to determine if the interest of nurses in a specialty such as public health nursing could be identified through their interest pa tern on the Strong Vocational Interest Blank. The subjects were 226 public health nurses who volunteered, qualified according to the criteria, and completed the Strong Vocational Interest Blank and a questionnaire. The tests were scored on 31 occupational scales. The study presents evidence of systematic and significant differences between institutional nurses. An interest pattern for graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing who had chosen to combine the study of nursing with a liberal arts education was also identified. Tables are appended. (Author/IM)

THE INTEREST PATTERN OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES

By

Constance E. Carmody

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

CG 002 300
ED021262

AMERICAN PERSONNEL AND GUIDANCE ASSOCIATION

April 8, 1968

Speech given at American Personnel and Guidance Assn. Convention
April 8, 1968 in Detroit, Michigan

THE INTEREST PATTERN OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES

Constance E. Carmody

Problem

Secondary students need the aid of valid instruments to improve their competence in choice of vocational preparation. Interest as well as aptitude is essential for persistence and satisfaction in an occupation. Secondary students who are interested in nursing are confronted with selection among four educational programs. Knowledge of interest patterns for nurses employed in specialties would have significant value for potential nurses.

Purpose

This study is made to determine if the interests of nurses in a specialty such as public health nursing can be identified through their interest pattern on the Strong Vocational Interest Blank. The ultimate objectives are to have a reliable method for counseling secondary students interested in nursing concerning choice of educational program; for counseling students in schools of nursing and graduate nurses regarding their choice of specialty and employment.

Procedures

It is necessary to determine what the interest pattern is for nurses who are employed in a specialty, like the work, and are successful. The investigator sent explanatory letters requesting volunteer participants to the directors of 50 public health nursing agencies geographically distributed in the United States. There were 266 public health nurses who volunteered, qualified according to the criteria, completed the Strong Vocational Interest Blank and a questionnaire in 1966.

The criteria are employment as a staff nurse; at least one year of experience as a public health nurse; continuance of employment in public health nursing because of preference, not because of salary, hours, location, nor family convenience. No educational requirements were specified in order to obtain a more typical sample of public health nurses.

The tests were scored on 31 occupational scales for the Women's Form of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank by the Center for Interest

Measurement Research, University of Minnesota, February, 1967. The scales for related occupations are grouped on the profile as follows:

> music, verbal-linguistic, social service, sales, business-clerical domestic, health-related services, medical sciences, physical sciences.

"In general, the profile scores are stable over time. There are hardly any changes after age 25."[1]

The writer analyzed the scores of the 266 public health nurses to determine the characteristics of their interest pattern before making three comparisons of the scores of public health nurses with the scores of specific groups of nurses to establish the identity of the interest pattern. A positive or negative difference of four or more points between the same occupational scores for any two groups is considered significant for the purpose of this study.

1. Comparison of the scores of the 266 public health nurses with the scores of 100 practitioner (institutional) nurses.[2]

2. Comparison of the scores of the 91 public health nurses who are graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing with the scores of 45 public health nurses who are graduates of three year diploma programs of nursing included in this study.

3. Comparison of the scores of the 91 public health nurses who are graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing with the scores of 7 senior students who had completed public health nursing practice in a baccalaureate program of nursing.[3]

Findings

The 266 public health nurses represent diverse backgrounds of origin and education. They give evidence of the migratory characteristics of nurses-in-general. The approximate mean age for the public health nurses is 36.3 years; mean education, 14.3 years; mean experience in public health nursing, 6.14 years.

Approximately 56% of the nurses are married; 52% are 20-34 years of age; 46%, are employed by official (tax supported) agencies; 34% are

---

[1]David P. Campbell, "Fourteen Points to Help You Understand Your Results," (memorandum, Minneapolis: Center for Interest Measurement Research, University of Minnesota, 1966).

[2]Barbara Tate, A Re-Evaluation of the Nurse Scale of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank. Unpublished Dissertation. New York: Teacher's College, 1961.

[3]7 senior students given the Strong Vocational Interest Test by the writer, Department of Nursing, Marycrest College, Davenport, Iowa, 1966.

graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing; 66%, are graduates of three year diploma programs of nursing and the academic education of this group varies from none to preparation at the graduate level. The 266 public health nurses are graduates of schools of nursing from Germany to Hawaii.

The public health nurses differ most significantly[4] on individual items of the interest inventory from the Women-in-General who were in Strong's original criterion group in the following ways:

> They express a preference for being a beauty specialist, dressmaker, interpreter, missionary, pharmacist, graduate nurse, probation officer, social worker, dancing teacher, and grade school teacher - especially kindergarten. They like amusement parks, women's pages, giving first aid assistance, attending church, sewing, trying new cooking recipes, people who assume leadership, and sick people.
>
> They would rather be married with a small income than be single and earn their own living; they prefer physical to mental activity and would rather do their own housework and laundry. They are not always on time with their work and find it least important to have an opportunity to ask questions and to consult about difficulties. Favorite school subjects are Economics, Physiology, and Sociology. They like to discuss their ideals with others.
>
> The public health nurses dislike being an author of a novel, a draftsman, an office manager, a radio lecturer, or statistician. They are averse to arguments, the financial pages, and repairing electric wiring. Steadiness and permanence of work are least important to them. They dislike to deal with things rather than with people, such as the work of a statistician in preference to that of a social worker. Lack of scientific interest is evident in dislike for statistics and mechanical drawing.

The mean scores for this group of public health nurses are higher on occupations in the music, verbal-linguistic, and social service groups such as music teacher, English teacher, speech pathologist, social science teacher, YWCA secretary, social worker, psychologist, and lawyer which indicate professional, social service career orientation.

Lower mean scores for business-clerical, domestic, health-related service, medical science, and physical science occupations such as mathematics-science teacher, laboratory technician, dietitian, housewife, office worker, and stenographer-secretary indicate they are less scientific and domestic and not oriented to office work.

Comparison of the scores (Table I) of the 266 public health nurses with the scores of the group of 100 practioner nurses shows the converse to be true of the practitioner nurses on 10 of the occupational scales.

---

[4] 17.9% - 32.0% difference, positive or negative.

The interest profile of the group of 91 public health nurses who are graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing (Table II) is similar to the interest pattern of the 266 public health nurses (Table I). Consistently higher scores in verbal-linguistic and social service occupational groups for nurses and/or students interested in nursing indicate a preference for an occupation in which effective work requires superior skill in communications, persistence, tolerance, persuasive ability, and adjustment to circumstances.

The pattern made by the scores of 45 public health nurses who are graduates of three year diploma programs of nursing (Table II) tends to resemble the profile of the practitioner nurses (Table I). Higher scores in the business-clerical, domestic, and scientific occupational groups indicate preference for an occupation in a controlled environment such as the institutional setting with observance of routine and schedules. This finding is apparent in the interest profile (not illustrated) of 9 senior students in the department of nursing[5] who were graduates of three year diploma programs of nursing and had completed public health nursing practice.

The interest profile for the 7 senior students (Table III) resembles the interest pattern of the 91 public health nurses who are graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing. The students have significantly higher scores on scales for occupations in social service, health-related service, and physical science occupations. This group of students had completed creditable work in public health nursing practice. They had teaching ability, awareness of family health service, and knowledge of the content of comprehensive care. However, their immediate choices were graduate study in psychiatric nursing and employment in hospitals.

Conclusions

1. This study presents evidence of systematic and significant differences between the interest patterns of samples of public health nurses and practitioner (institutional) nurses through their interest profiles on the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (Table I).

2. Further analysis identifies the interest profiles illustrated in Table I as the interest patterns of graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing and graduates of three year diploma programs of nursing (Table II).

3. The most significant finding of this study is identification of an interest pattern for graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing who had chosen to combine the study of nursing with a liberal arts education.[6]

---

[5] 9 Senior Students (Graduate Nurses) given the Strong Vocational Interest Test, Department of Nursing, Marycrest College, Davenport, Iowa, 1966, 1967.

[6] Constance Carmody, "The Interest Pattern of Public Health Nurses," Educational Research in Wisconsin, (Monograph) Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting, Wisconsin Educational Research Association, 1967, p.8.

The progressive fusion of institutional and home nursing to provide comprehensive care of patients and community nursing requires that nurses have a wide range of abilities and interests. The facility to transfer knowledge and skill from one situation to another, flexibility, and adaptability should enable nurses with baccalaureate preparation to function effectively in multiple areas of nursing service.

4. Conclusive evidence is not presented in this study that an interest pattern is identified for interest in a nursing specialty such as public health nursing.

Recommendations

1. Counselors should be alert to the qualifications expected of students in the different nursing education programs.

2. Secondary students who are interested in nursing should have an opportunity for objective appraisal of their abilities and knowledge of their interest patterns to assist them to make prudent decisions for vocational preparation.

3. Guidance personnel should be available to assist students of nursing and graduate nurses with the selection of employment.

4. Nurses should have minimal responsibilities for clerical work.

5. Further study is indicated to identify interest patterns for nurses employed in nursing specialties which require unique interest, ability, and preparation.

N.B. June 1, 1968

The Center for Interest Measurement Research[7], University of Minnesota, has revised the Women's Form of the Strong Vocational Interest Test, 1935 edition, since the public health nurses in this study were given the test in 1966. A new Women-in-General group was tested to replace the original group. The interest profiles on 19 newly developed basic scales for the 266 public health nurses in this study and 263 nurses who graduated from baccalaureate programs of nursing[8] are presented in Table IV.

Interest patterns for two groups of nurses, who are graduates of baccalaureate programs of nursing and for whom the area of employment is known, are needed to determine significant differences between their interest profiles on the new scales.

---

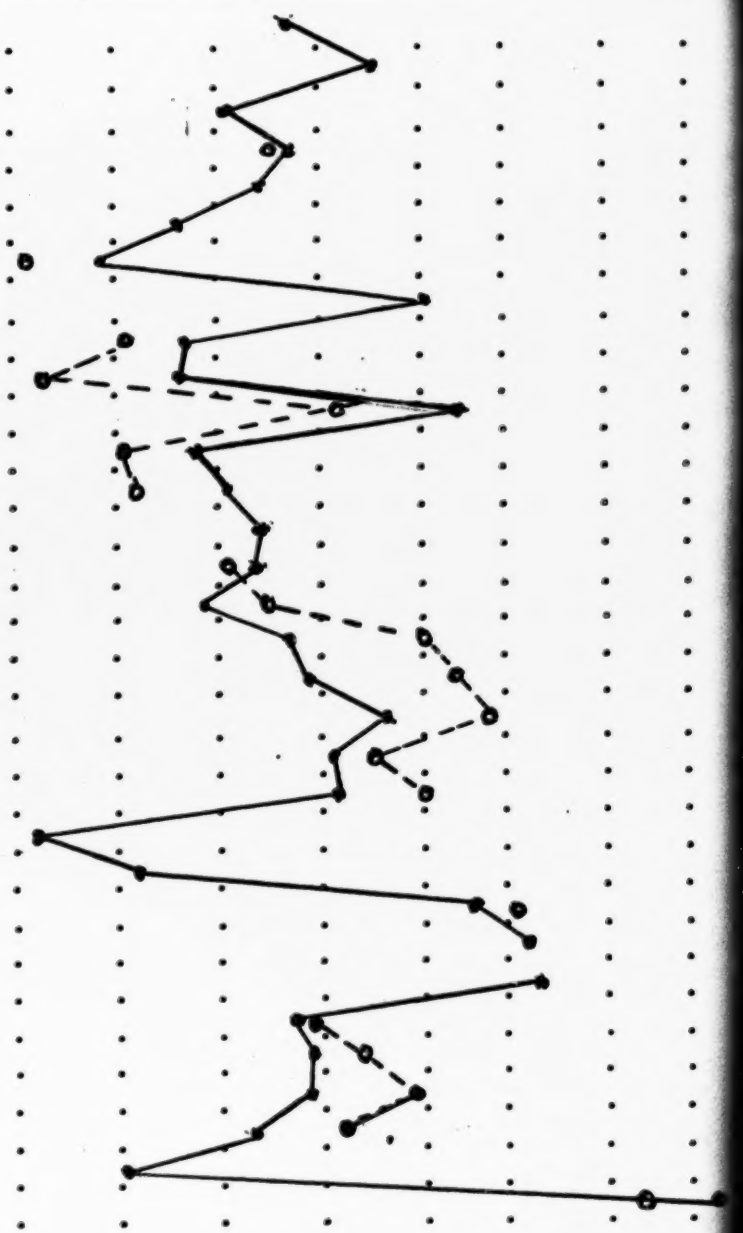
[7]David P. Campbell, personal letters, April 19, and May 13, 1968.

[8]263 Nurses Graduated from Baccalaureate Programs of Nursing Given the Strong Vocational Interest Test by the Center for Interest Measurement Research, University of Minnesota, 1967.

TABLE I

MEAN INTEREST SCORES ON 19 OCCUPATIONAL SCALES OF THE STRONG VOCATIONAL INTEREST BLANK FOR 266 PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES* AND A SAMPLE OF TATE'S PRACTITIONER NURSE GROUP**

	OCCUPATIONAL SCALE	MEAN SCORES PHN	PRAC.N	DIFF.0
I	MUSIC TEACHER	28.5	-	
	MUSIC PERFORMER	32.8	-	
II	MODEL	25.5	-	
	ARTIST	28.6	28.1	+0.5
	AUTHOR	27.5	-	
	LIBRARIAN	23.7	-	
	ENGLISH TEACHER	19.6	15.6	+4.5
III	SPEECH PATHOLOGIST	35.1	-	
	SOCIAL SC. TEACHER	23.4	20.1	+3.3
	YWCA SECRETARY	23.1	16.8	+6.3
	SOCIAL WORKER	37.0	30.1	+6.9
	PSYCHOLOGIST	23.9	20.1	+3.8
	LAWYER	25.2	20.4	+4.8
IV	LIFE INS. SALES.	27.1	-	
V	BUYER	27.0	25.5	+1.6
	BUS. ED. TEACHER	24.6	27.5	-2.9
	STENO. SECRETARY	28.6	35.0	-6.4
	OFFICE WORKER	29.7	37.0	-7.3
VI	HOUSEWIFE	33.3	39.4	-6.1
	HOME ECON. TEACHER	30.3	32.5	-2.1
	DIETITIAN	30.8	35.0	-4.2
VII	H.S. P.E. TEACHER	16.1	-	
	COLL. P.E. TEACHER	20.9	-	
	OCCUPAT. THERAPIST	38.0	40.4	-2.4
	PHYSICAL THERAPIST	41.0	-	
	NURSE	41.5	-	
VIII	PHYSICIAN	28.5	29.3	-0.8
	DENTIST	29.6	32.0	-2.4
	LAB. TECHNICIAN	29.6	34.8	-5.2
IX	MATH.SC. TEACHER	26.9	31.1	-4.1
	ENGINEER	20.0	-	
	FEMININITY-MASCUL. (non-occupa.score)	51.4	47.4	+4.0



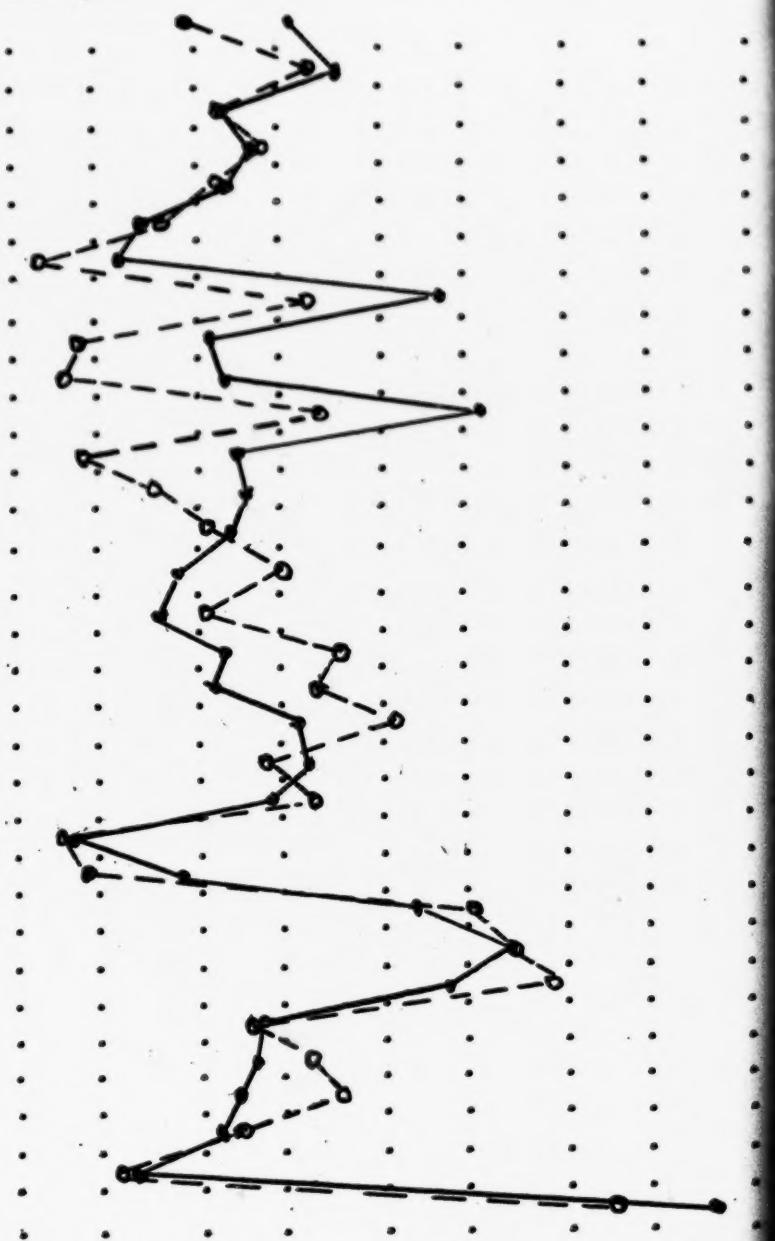
*266 Public Health Nurses._____ Approximate mean age - 36.3 years, mean experience in Public Health Nursing - 6.14 years.

**100 Practitioner Nurses ●------ Mean age - 36.3 years, mean experience - 10.63 years.

TABLE II

MEAN INTEREST SCORES ON 31 OCCUPATIONAL SCALES OF THE STRONG VOCATIONAL INTEREST BLANK FOR 91 PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES* GRADUATED FROM BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS OF NURSING AND 45 PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES** GRADUATED FROM THREE YEAR DIPLOMA PROGRAMS OF NURSING

	OCCUPATIONAL SCALE	MEAN SCORES 4yr. PHN	3yr. PHN	DIFF.0
I	MUSIC TEACHER	30.2	24.9	+5.3
	MUSIC PERFORMER	33.1	32.2	+0.9
II	MODEL	26.5	26.6	-0.1
	ARTIST	28.1	29.0	-0.9
	AUTHOR	26.9	26.8	+0.1
	LIBRARIAN	22.3	23.6	-1.3
	ENGLISH TEACHER	21.2	16.3	+4.9
III	SPEECH PATHOLOGIST	39.0	31.8	+7.2
	SOCIAL SC.TEACHER	25.5	19.9	+5.6
	YWCA SECRETARY	26.5	18.3	+8.2
	SOCIAL WORKER	40.7	32.2	+8.5
	PSYCHOLOGIST	27.7	19.8	+7.9
	LAWYER	27.9	22.8	+5.1
IV	LIFE INS. SALES	27.1	25.6	+1.5
V	BUYER	24.6	30.0	-5.4
	BUS. ED. TEACHER	23.5	25.5	-2.0
	STENO. SECRETARY	26.6	33.3	-6.7
	OFFICE WORKER	25.6	32.0	-6.4
VI	HOUSEWIFE	31.1	35.3	-4.2
	HOME ECON.TEACHER	31.5	29.7	+1.8
	DIETITIAN	29.6	31.9	-2.3
VII	H.S. P.E. TEACHER	18.6	18.4	-0.2
	COLL.P.E. TEACHER	24.4	19.8	+4.6
	OCCUPA. THERAPIST	37.0	40.2	-3.2
	PHYSICAL THERAPIST	42.3	42.4	-0.1
	NURSE	39.2	44.3	-5.1
VIII	PHYSICIAN	28.7	28.4	+0.3
	DENTIST	28.3	31.8	-3.5
	LAB. TECHNICIAN	27.0	32.8	-5.8
IX	MATH.SC. TEACHER	26.1	27.5	-1.4
	ENGINEER	22.1	21.2	+0.9
	FEMININITY-MASCUL. (non-occupat.score)	53.6	48.0	+5.6



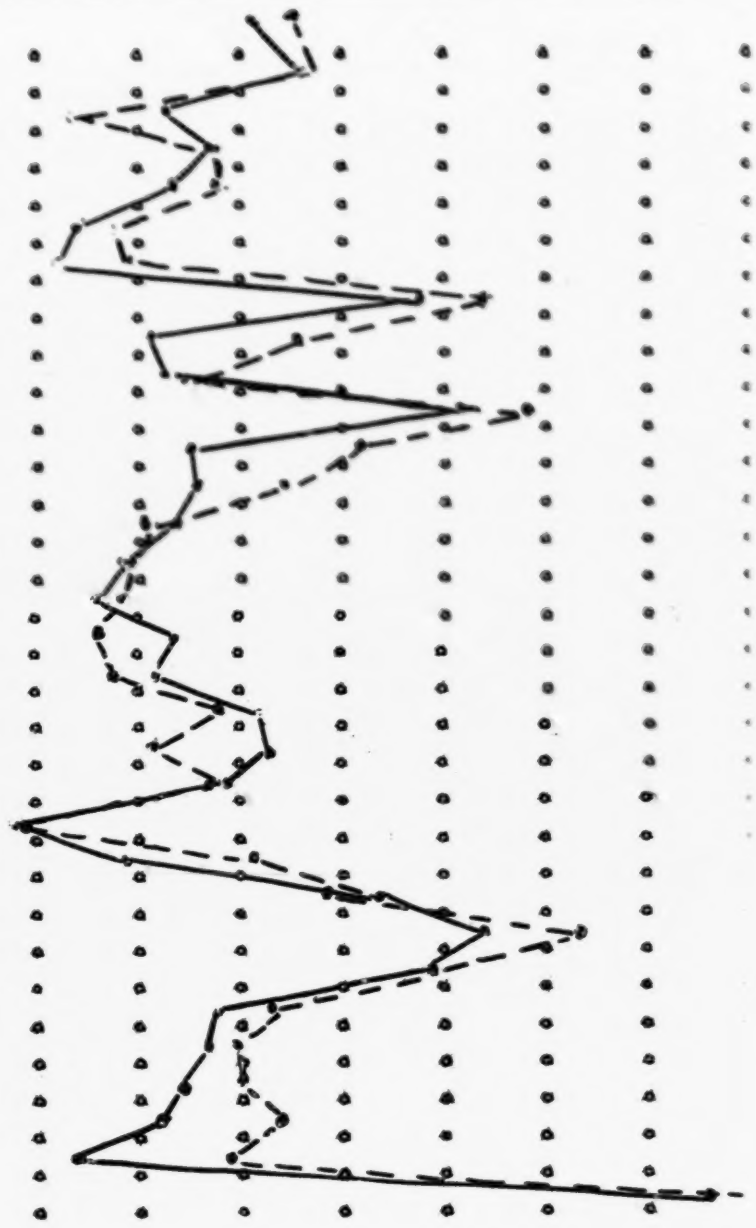
*91 Public Health Nurses ._____ Approximate mean age - 28.76 years, mean education - 16.1 years, mean experience in Public Health Nursing - 3.33 years.

**45 Public Health Nurses o----- Approximate mean age - 39.94 years, mean education - 12.+ years, mean experience in Public Health Nursing - 6.91 years.

TABLE III

MEAN INTEREST SCORES ON 31 OCCUPATIONAL SCALES OF THE STRONG VOCATIONAL INTEREST BLANK FOR 91 PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES* GRADUATED FROM BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS OF NURSING AND 7 SENIOR STUDENTS IN A BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM OF NURSING**

	OCCUPATIONAL SCALE	MEAN SCORES 4 yr. PHN	4 yr. Stu.	DIFF
I	MUSIC TEACHER	30.2	32.3	-2.1
	MUSIC PERFORMER	33.1	33.3	-0.2
II	MODEL	26.5	21.9	+4.6
	ARTIST	28.1	28.4	-0.3
	AUTHOR	26.9	28.7	-1.8
	LIBRARIAN	22.3	24.3	-2.0
	ENGLISH TEACHER	21.2	24.9	-3.7
III	SPEECH PATHOLOGIST	39.0	42.4	-3.4
	SOCIAL SC. TEACHER	25.5	33.1	-7.6
	YWCA SECRETARY	26.5	27.1	-0.6
	SOCIAL WORKER	40.7	44.5	-3.8
	PSYCHOLOGIST	27.7	35.9	-8.2
	LAWYER	27.9	32.4	-4.5
IV	LIFE INS. SALES	27.1	25.1	+2.0
V	BUYER	24.6	24.9	-0.3
	BUS. ED. TEACHER	23.5	24.6	-1.1
	STENO. SECRETARY	26.6	22.9	+3.7
	OFFICE WORKER	25.6	23.9	+1.7
VI	HOUSEWIFE	31.1	29.1	+2.0
	HOME ECON. TEACHER	31.5	25.4	+6.1
	DIETITIAN	29.6	29.4	+0.2
VII	H.S. P.E. TEACHER	18.6	19.7	-1.1
	COLL. P.E. TEACHER	24.4	30.4	-6.0
	OCCUPA. THERAPIST	37.0	34.9	+2.1
	PHYSICAL THERAPIST	42.3	47.0	-4.7
	NURSE	39.2	39.6	-0.4
VIII	PHYSICIAN	28.7	32.0	-3.3
	DENTIST	28.3	30.0	-1.7
	LAB. TECHNICIAN	27.0	30.0	-3.0
IX	MATH. SC. TEACHER	26.1	31.9	-5.8
	ENGINEER	22.1	29.6	-7.5
	FEMININITY-MASCUL. (non-occupa. score)	53.6	56.0	-2.4



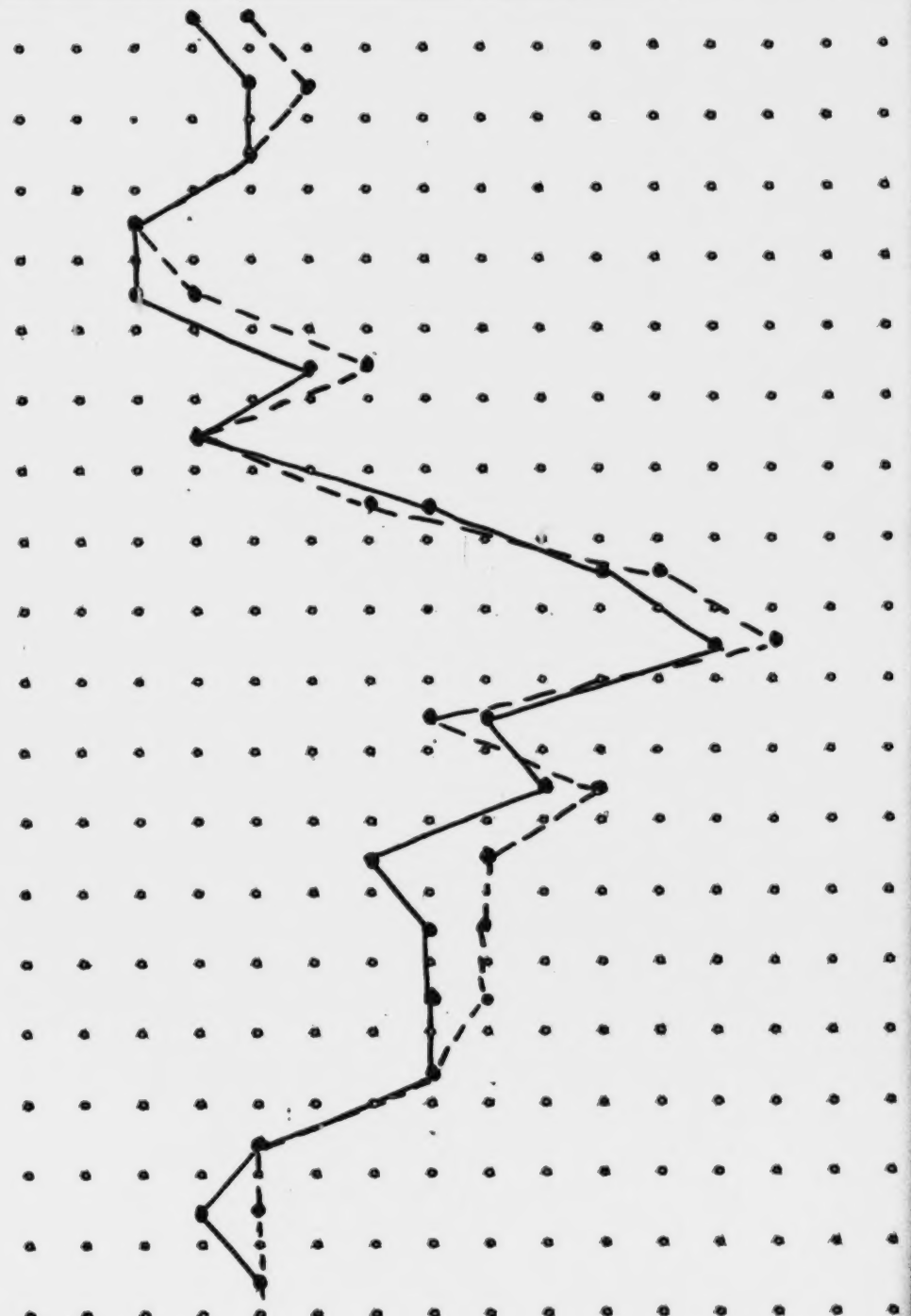
*91 Public Health Nurses .___ approximate mean age - 28.76 years, mean education - 16.1 years, mean experience in Public Health Nursing - 3.33 years.

**7 Senior Students .--- approximate mean age - 24.9 years, mean education - 15.9 years, mean experience in Public Health Nursing - 0. years.

TABLE IV[9]

STANDARD SCORES ON 19 BASIC SCALES OF THE REVISED STRONG VOCATIONAL INTEREST BLANK FOR WOMEN FOR 266 PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES* AND 263 NURSES GRADUATED FROM BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS OF NURSING**

SCALES	STD SCORE	SCORES PHN	SCORES BAC.N.
1. Public Speaking	48	48	49
2. Law/Politics	49	49	50
3. Merchandising	49	49	49
4. Office Practice	47	47	47
5. Numbers	47	47	48
6. Physical Science	50	50	51
7. Mechanical	48	48	48
8. Outdoors	52	52	51
9. Biological Science	55	55	56
10. Medical Service	57	57	58
11. Teaching	53	53	52
12. Social Service	54	54	55
13. Sports	51	51	53
14. Homemaking	52	52	53
15. Religious Activities	52	52	53
16. Music	52	52	52
17. Art	49	49	49
18. Performing Arts	48	48	49
19. Writing	49	49	49



[9]Center for Interest Measurement Research, University of Minnesota. May 13, 196

*266 Public Health Nurses .___ approximate mean age - 36.3 years, mean education 14.3 years, mean experience in Public Health Nursing - 6.14 years.

**263 Nurses o--- mean age - 31.0 years, mean education - 16.3 years, mean experience in nursing - 6.0 years.

PARTICIPANTS

Number	Agency	Address
41	Department of Health	Detroit, Michigan
32	Visiting Nurse Association	Los Angeles, California
24	Washtenaw County Health Department	Ann Arbor, Michigan
23	Fresno County Department of Health	Fresno, California
18	Seattle-King County Department of Health	Seattle, Washington
18	State of Hawaii Department of Health	Honolulu, Hawaii
16	Visiting Nurse Association	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
14	Visiting Nurse Association	Detroit, Michigan
10	Department of Health	Fort Worth, Texas
9	Greater Anchorage Borough Health Department	Anchorage, Alaska
8	Public Health Nursing Association	Des Moines, Iowa
7	Visiting Nurse Association	Cincinnati, Ohio
7	Visiting Nurse Association of Lycoming County	Williamsport, Pennsylvania
6	Minneapolis Health Department and Visiting Nurse Association	Minneapolis, Minnesota
5	City-County Health Department	Great Falls, Montana
4	Scott County Health Center	Benton, Missouri
3	Grant County Health Department	Lancaster, Wisconsin
2	Kansas City-Wyandotte County Department of Health	Kansas City, Kansas
2	Marquette University	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
1	Rochester-Olmsted County Health Department	Rochester, Minnesota
1	Visiting Nurse Association	Green Bay, Wisconsin
1	Public Schools	Hixton, Wisconsin
1	Public Schools	Columbus, Wisconsin
1	Public Schools	Ladysmith, Wisconsin
1	Public Schools	Ellsworth, Wisconsin
1	Public Schools	Fennimore, Wisconsin
1	Public Schools	Lancaster, Wisconsin
1	City of Wausau	Wausau, Wisconsin
1	City of Beloit	Beloit, Wisconsin
1	City of Brodhead	Brodhead, Wisconsin
1	City of Janesville	Janesville, Wisconsin
1	City of Kaukauna	Kaukauna, Wisconsin
1	City of Merrill	Merrill, Wisconsin
1	City of New London	New London, Wisconsin
1	City of Watertown	Watertown, Wisconsin
1	City of Neillsville	Neillsville, Wisconsin

I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. David Campbell, Director, Center for Interest Measurement Research, University of Minnesota, and to the nurses who made this study possible.

April, 1968

Constance E. Carmody